

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOR RELEASE: 6:30 P.M., E.D.T., JULY 14, 1976

(202) 426-8787

ISSUED: July 14, 1976

Forwarded to:

Mr. Bernard M. Evans
Administrator
Maryland State Highway Administration
300 West Preston Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21203

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

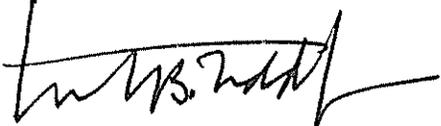
H-76-27

On October 11, 1975, a charter bus owned and operated by the Metropolitan Coach Company was eastbound, in heavy rain, on Interstate 495 in Bethesda, Maryland. As the bus negotiated a curve to the right at 50 mph, the rear wheels of the bus lost traction and the rear of the bus began to slide from side to side. In its final slide to the right, the bus rotated counterclockwise 160° and contacted the guardrail. The bus flipped over, rotated 270° about its longitudinal axis, and landed on its left side in a roadside ravine. Of the 29 occupants, 26 were injured.

The National Transportation Safety Board's analysis revealed that .06 ft/ft superelevation at the accident site is only half of that which is theoretically desirable for the posted speed limit. This analysis is supported by the 8° at 50 mph ballbank reading which was recorded during the October 29, 1975, test that was made by your administration. The Board recognizes that superelevation should not exceed 0.08 ft/ft in geographic areas which are likely to experience snow and ice.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Maryland State Highway Administration:

Increase the superelevation of the curve at the accident site and resurface it to increase the frictional coefficient of the pavement. (H-76-27) (Class III, Longer Term Followup)


By: Webster B. Todd, Jr.
Chairman

TODD, Chairman, McADAMS, HOUGE, BURGESS, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendation.

THIS RECOMMENDATION IS TO BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC ON THE DATE SHOWN ABOVE. NO PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE THAT DATE.

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